

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: QUEBEC'S DIALOGUE OF THE DEAF CONTINUES

1. PUBLIC COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON QUEBEC'S CONTROVERSIAL LANGUAGE
"BILL ONE" HAVE ASSUMED PREDICTED PATTERN. APPEARANCES BY
PETITIONERS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED WITH OPPOSING EXTREMISTS
FOLLOWING ONE ANOTHER WITH ONLY OCCASIONAL MODERATE BREAK IN
SERIES OF POINT AND COUNTERPOINT PRESENTATIONS. ONE HAS IMPRESSION
OF CAREFUL STAGE MANAGEMENT AIMED AT MAKING BILL'S AUTHOR,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, CAMILLE LAURIN, APPEAR
TO BE SOUL OF MODERATION AS HE QUIETLY REPRIMANDS PETITIONERS
ON EITHER SIDE OF QUESTION.

2. PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE ARE THEMSELVES
DIVIDED ON LANGUAGE QUESTION WITH SOME FRENCH MEMBERS OF LIBERAL
PARTY CLEARLY FAVORING LEGISLATION AND MOST AMBIVALENT IN THEIR
ROLE AS CRITICS. THUS, ANGLOPHONE PETITIONERS GET ONLY LIMITED
ASSISTANCE FROM OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE AS THEY
FACE TOUGH, INQUISITORIAL ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY LAURIN AND HIS
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LIEUTENANTS.

3. MOST EFFECTIVE CRITICISM OF BILL THUSFAR HAS COME FROM OUTSIDE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND COMMITTEE HEARINGS. PRIDE OF PLACE GOES TO
CLOSELY REASONED BRIEF FROM "QUEBEC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,"
A BODY SET UP BY LEGISLATION IN 1975. COMMISSIONERS CLAIMED "BILL
ONE" COULD PRESENT "SERIOUS DANGERS TO DEFENSE OF FUNDAMENTAL

RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES." IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE AND IMPRUDENT TO CRITICISE, THE GOQ HAS ALREADY INDICATED INFORMALLY THAT SOME, IF NOT ALL, OF THE COMMISSION'S DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO REVISED "BILL ONE" AFTER HEARINGS CONCLUDE.

4. ANOTHER EFFECTIVE CHALLENGE TO "BILL ONE" WAS POSED BY CRITIQUE SIGNED BY 326 PROMINENT FRANCOPHONES. IN ANGRY RETORT, LAURIN BRANDED THIS GROUP OF NOTABLES "SELLOUTS" (INFEODES) TO ANGLOPHONE ESTABLISHMENT. WHILE LAURIN'S APPEAL TO TRIBAL INSTINCT MAY STRIKE FAVORABLE VIBRATIONS AMONG PQ URBAN INTELLECTUAL MILITANTS, IT MAY APPEAR LESS REASONABLE TO MANY OTHER NATIONALIST VOTERS UPON WHOM PQ DEPENDS FOR SUCCESS IN REFERENDUM AND FOR REELECTION. SUCH ATTEMPTS TO DISCREDIT FRANCOPHONE OPPONENTS AS SELLOUTS OF QUEBECOIS COLLECTIVITY LIKELY BECOME INCREASINGLY FREQUENT AS CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS OF QUEBECOIS BECOMES MORE HEATED AND, PER FORCE, INCREASINGLY MALEVOLENT.

5. COMMENT: HEARINGS ON "BILL ONE" LIKELY CONTINUE AT PRESENT WELL MEASURED PACE UNTIL ALL OR BULK OF SOME 200 PETITIONS HAVE BEEN HEARD. PLEAS UNLIKELY HAVE MORE THAN MINIMAL AFFECT ON IMPLACABLE DR. LAURIN. REAL DEBATE WILL TAKE PLACE WITHIN CABINET WHERE LANGUAGE MODERATES HAVE ALREADY REPORTEDLY INDUCED THEIR MORE RIGID COLLEAGUES TO ACCEPT ADJUSTMENTS TO ELIMINATE MANY OF MORE BLATANT DISCRIMINATORY DETAILS IN PROPOSED LAW. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOWEVER, NO COMPROMISE ON PRINCIPLE OF PREDOMINANCE OF FRENCH IN QUEBEC'S EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS IS LIKELY TO OCCUR.
MCNAMARA

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